

# **MBA-2<sup>ND</sup> SEM-ORANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**

## **LEADERSHIP**

In order to get an understanding on the concept of Leadership the researcher began with looking at the most common definitions of leadership. During this examination it was felt by the researcher that there has to be some link between the issues and the concept of leadership. A study and analysis of the popular definitions on leadership reveals that most definitions tend to focus on the individual traits and characteristics. Eminent personalities had their own views and hence have defined leadership.

Some of the definitions on leadership are as follows-

- Leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goal or goals.
- Leadership is an influence process that enable managers to get their people to do willingly what must be done, do well what ought to be done.(Cribbin, J.J. 'Leadership: strategies for organizational effectiveness')
- Leadership is defined as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement.(Rauch & Behling.)
- Leadership is discovering the company's destiny and having the courage to follow it. ( Joe Jaworski - Organizational Learning Center at MIT.).
- Leadership is interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation, and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals. ( Tannenbaum,Weschler & Massarik).
- Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation.( Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. 'Management of Organizational Behavior'. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall 1988 p. 86)
- Leadership is the process of making sense of what people are doing together so that people will understand and be committed.( Drath & Palus) (1994)
- Leadership: The capacity and will to rally people to a common purpose together with the character that inspires confidence and trust (Field Marshal Montgomery)
- Leadership is a purposeful relationship, which occurs episodically among participants, who use their individual skills in influence, to advocate transforming change.( Michael S. Kearns, 2005)
- Leadership is not the private reserve of a few charismatic men and women. It is a process ordinary people use when they are bringing forth the best from themselves and others.
- Leadership is the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization (D.Katz & Kahn, 1978)
- Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement (Rauch & Behling, 1984)

## LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Leadership has been described as the “process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task” .A definition more inclusive of followers comes from Alan Keith of Genentech who said "Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen." Students of leadership have produced theories involving traits, situational interaction, function, behavior, power, vision and values, charisma, and intelligence among others. Various theories on leadership are as follows-

**Trait theory**-Trait theory tries to describe the types of behavior and personality tendencies associated with effective leadership. This is probably the first academic theory of leadership. Thomas Carlyle (1841) can be considered one of the pioneers of the trait theory, using such approach to identify the talents, skills and physical characteristics of men who arose to power. Ronald Heifetz (1994) traces the trait theory approach back to the nineteenth-century tradition of associating the history of society to the history of great men.

Proponents of the trait approach usually list leadership qualities, assuming certain traits or characteristics will tend to lead to effective leadership. Shelley Kirkpatrick and Edwin A. Locke (1991) exemplify the trait theory.

They argue that "key leader traits include: drive (a broad term which includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative), leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself), honesty, integrity, self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability), cognitive ability, and knowledge of the business. According to their research, "there is less clear evidence for traits such as charisma, creativity and flexibility".

Although trait theory has an intuitive appeal, difficulties may arise in proving its tenets, and opponents frequently challenge this approach. The "strongest" versions of trait theory see these "leadership characteristics" as innate, and accordingly labels some people as "born leaders" due to their psychological makeup. On this reading of the theory, leadership development involves identifying and measuring leadership qualities, screening potential leaders from non-leaders, then training those with potential.

**Behavioral and style theory**- In response to the criticism of the trait approach, theorists began to research leadership as a set of behaviors, evaluating the behavior of 'successful' leaders, determining a behavior taxonomy and identifying broad leadership styles. David McClelland, for example, saw leadership skills, not so much as a set of traits, but as a pattern of motives. He claimed that successful leaders will tend to have a high need for power, a low need for affiliation, and a high level of what he called activity inhibition (one might call it self-control).

**The Managerial grid model theory**-Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lipitt, and Ralph White developed in 1939 the seminal work on the influence of leadership styles and performance. The researchers evaluated the performance of groups of eleven-year-old boys under different types of work climate.

In each, the leader exercised his influence regarding the type of group decision making, praise and criticism (feedback), and the management of the group tasks (project management) according to three styles: (1) authoritarian, (2) democratic and (3) laissez-faire.

Authoritarian climates were characterized by leaders who make decisions alone, demand strict compliance to his orders, and dictate each step taken; future steps were uncertain to a large degree.

The leader is not necessarily hostile but is aloof from participation in work and commonly offers personal praise and criticism for the work done. Democratic climates were characterized by collective decision processes, assisted by the leader. Before accomplishing tasks, perspectives are gained from group discussion and technical advice from a leader. Members are given choices and collectively decide the division of labor. Praise and criticism in such an environment are objective, fact minded and given by a group member without necessarily having participated extensively in the actual work.

Laissez faire climates gave freedom to the group for policy determination without any participation from the leader. The leader remains uninvolved in work decisions unless asked, does not participate in the division of labor, and very infrequently gives praise. The results seemed to confirm that the democratic climate was preferred.

The managerial grid model is also based on a behavioral theory. The model was developed by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton in 1964 and suggests five different leadership styles, based on the leaders' concern for people and their concern for goal achievement.

**Situational and contingency theory**-Situational theory also appeared as a reaction to the trait theory of leadership. Social scientists argued that history was more than the result of intervention of great men as Carlyle suggested. Herbert Spencer (1884) said that the times produce the person and not the other way around. This theory assumes that different situations call for different characteristics; according to this group of theories, no single optimal psychographic profile of a leader exists.

According to the theory, "what an individual actually does when acting as a leader is in large part dependent upon characteristics of the situation in which he functions." Some theorists started to synthesize the trait and situational approaches. Building upon the research of Lewin et.al, academics began to normalize the descriptive models of leadership climates, defining three leadership styles and identifying in which situations each style works better.

The authoritarian leadership style, for example, is approved in periods of crisis but fails to win the "hearts and minds" of their followers in the day-to-day management; the democratic leadership style is more adequate in situations that require consensus building; finally, the laissez faire leadership style is appreciated by the degree of freedom it provides, but as the leader does not "take charge", he can be perceived as a failure in protracted or thorny organizational problems.

This theorist defined the style of leadership as contingent to the situation, which is sometimes, classified as contingency theory. Four contingency leadership theories appear more prominently in the recent years: Fiedler contingency model, Vroom- Yetton decision model, the path-goal theory, and the Hersey-Blanchard situational theory.

The Fiedler contingency model bases the leader's effectiveness on what Fred Fiedler called situational contingency. This results from the interaction of leadership style and situational favorableness (later called "situational control"). The theory defined two types of leader: those who tend to accomplish the task by developing good- relationships with the group (relationship-oriented), and those who have as their prime concern carrying out the task itself (task-oriented).

According to Fiedler, there is no ideal leader. Both task-oriented and relationship-oriented leaders can be effective if their leadership orientation fits the situation. When there is a good leader-member relation, a highly structured task, and high leader position power, the situation is considered a "favorable situation". Fiedler found that task-oriented leaders are more effective in extremely favorable or unfavorable situations, whereas relationship-oriented leaders perform best in situations with intermediate favorability.

Victor Vroom, in collaboration with Phillip Yetton (1973) and later with Arthur Jago (1988), developed a taxonomy for describing leadership situations, taxonomy that was used in a normative decision model where leadership styles were connected to situational variables, defining which approach was more suitable to which situation. This approach was novel because it supported the idea that the same manager could rely on different group decision making approaches depending on the attributes of each situation. This model was later referred as situational contingency theory.

The path-goal theory of leadership was developed by Robert House (1971) and was based on the expectancy theory of Victor Vroom. According to House, the essence of the theory is "the meta proposition that leaders, to be effective, engage in behaviors that complement subordinates' environments and abilities in a manner that compensates for deficiencies and is instrumental to subordinate satisfaction and individual and work unit performance.

The theory identifies four leader behaviors, achievement-oriented, directive, participative, and supportive; those are contingent to the environment factors and follower characteristics. In contrast to the Fiedler contingency model, the path-goal model states that the four leadership behaviors are fluid, and that leaders can adopt any of the four depending on what the situation demands. The path-goal model can be classified both as a contingency theory, as it depends on the circumstances, but also as a transactional leadership theory, as the theory emphasizes the reciprocity behavior between the leader and the followers.

The situational leadership model proposed by Hersey and Blanchard suggest four leadership-styles and four levels of follower-development. For effectiveness, the model posits that the leadership-style must match the appropriate level of follower ship-development. In this model, leadership behavior becomes a function not only of the characteristics of the leader, but of the characteristics of followers as well.

**Functional theory-** Functional leadership theory (Hackman & Walton, 1986; McGrath, 1962) is a particularly useful theory for addressing specific leader behaviors expected to contribute to organizational or unit effectiveness.

This theory argues that the leader's main job is to see that whatever is necessary to group needs is taken care of; thus, a leader can be said to have done their job well when they have contributed to group effectiveness and cohesion (Fleishman et al., 1991; Hackman & Wageman, 2005; Hackman & Walton, 1986). While functional leadership theory has most often been applied to team leadership (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001), it has also been effectively applied to broader organizational leadership as well (Zaccaro, 2001).

In summarizing literature on functional leadership (see Kozlowski et al. (1996), Zaccaro et al. (2001), Hackman and Walton (1986), Hackman & Wageman (2005), Morgeson (2005)), Klein, Zeigert, Knight, and Xiao (2006) observed five broad functions a leader provides when promoting unit effectiveness. These functions include: (1) environmental monitoring, (2) organizing subordinate activities, (3) teaching and coaching subordinates, (4) motivating others, and (5) intervening actively in the group's work.

A variety of leadership behaviors are expected to facilitate these functions. In initial work identifying leader behavior, Fleishman (Fleishman, 1953) observed that subordinates perceived their supervisors' behavior in terms of two broad categories referred to as consideration and initiating structure.

Consideration includes behavior involved in fostering effective relationships. Examples of such behavior would include showing concern for a subordinate or acting in a supportive manner towards others. Initiating structure involves the actions of the leader focused specifically on task accomplishment. This could include role clarification, setting performance standards, and holding subordinates accountable to those standards.

**Transactional and transformational theory-** The transactional leader (Burns, 1978) is given power to perform certain tasks and reward or punish for the team's performance. It gives the opportunity to the manager to lead the group and the group agrees to follow his lead to accomplish a predetermined goal in exchange for something else. Power is given to the leader to evaluate, correct and train subordinates when productivity is not up to the desired level and reward effectiveness when expected outcome is reached.

The transformational leader (Burns, 2008) motivates its team to be effective and efficient. Communication is the base for goal achievement focusing the group on the final desired outcome or goal attainment.

This leader is highly visible and uses chain of command to get the job done. Transformational leaders focus on the big picture, needing to be surrounded by people who take care of the details. The leader is always looking for ideas that move the organization to reach the company's vision.